

THE STORY OF JOHN PAUL JONES

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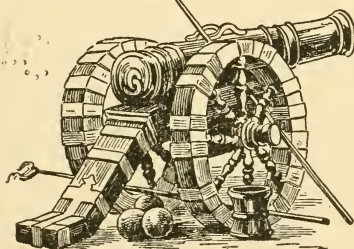
"We are waiting for you—come on—it's getting late and time to begin."—Page 35

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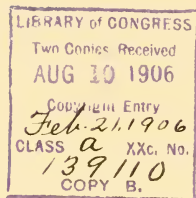
THE STORY OF
JOHN PAUL JONES
(JOHN PAUL)

BY PERCY K. FITZHUGH

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McLOUGHLIN BROTHERS



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He led a free and happy life amid these grand surroundings.

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JOHN PAUL JONES

CHAPTER I

BORN 1747

EARLY DAYS

DIED 1792



In the year 1758 a little trading vessel called the *Friendship* sailed out of the harbor of Whitehaven, in England, and turned her prow in the direction of the good colony of Virginia. Among

the crew was a little boy, who had been lately bound apprentice to the ship's owner. Full of life, and overjoyed with expectations of the wonderful continent of the West, he ran about the vessel doing odd jobs, making himself useful in

many ways, and becoming a favorite with all the crew.

He was the most precious and valuable of all that little vessel's precious cargo, including the ship's company, for he turned out to be the famous and gallant John Paul Jones.

The first thing for us to do in going over the life and brave deeds of Paul Jones, is to take away his last name, which he had no right to at all. He took it, as the English said he took many other things without any just claims. However this may be, his right name was simply John Paul, and he was born on the 6th of July, 1747. Like several other Revolutionary heroes, he was not born in the country whose glorious history he helped to make, but on a fine old estate in the parish of Kirk-bean, Scotland. And like many another great man, his parents were poor.

The father of our hero was a gardener on this estate, which was owned by a Mr. Craik, and called "Arbigland." He had, as we are told,

excellent taste in laying out gardens and planting trees. It was a beautiful country home where the little John first saw the light of day, with shady groves and beautiful lawn, and all the things that make for health and happiness in a little boy. John's father worked about the place and rested in a quaint little cottage almost under the eaves of the large mansion. His father had been gardener before him; had lived and died close to nature in that homely and gentle trade—he was at the end of a long line of gardeners, who had come by their positions as naturally as kings come by their thrones, and it seemed very probable that the little boy, who romped around the spacious grounds, and ran across the flower beds, and climbed the tall elms, would come to be a gardener, too, and pass a quiet life far away from all the din and tumult of bloodshed and war. But this was not to be.

John's father began to work for Mr. Craik when he was quite young and he soon became

a favorite of his wealthy and generous master. He had many duties to perform, but he found time from them to woo and win Jean Macduff, the ruddy and buxom daughter of a small farmer in the neighboring parish of New Abbey, and we may imagine him making his way through the rocky passes, across the crooked streams, over the wonderful, wild landscape which Sir Walter Scott tells us about, to call on his Scotch lassie and present her with a fresh bouquet from Mr. Craik's gardens.

Jean's family were as old as the Scotch hills and quite as rugged and proud. There were strength and force and energy in the good old stock from which she came, and there was a generous share of these qualities left on hand for the child who came to her later and made her name familiar to all the world.

The marriage of the homely pair took place after the fashion of the simple Scotch country folk, and they settled down on Mr. Craik's es-

tate to a life of happiness and usefulness. If anyone had told them that they should help to be responsible, in any way, for the independence of the United States of America, they would probably have opened their eyes very wide, and accused the speaker of flattery.

Seven children came to this pair, two of whom died before they had an opportunity to win renown, one at the age of seven months and the other at the end of three days. Of those who grew up, the eldest was a boy named William. Then came three girls, Elizabeth, Janet, and Mary Ann. And then came John. When John grew up he had an illustrious child of his own, of whom any parent might be proud, a child that has grown to strong and splendid power. For John became, as you know, the *father* of the American navy.

When years had passed, and this gardener's son had achieved greatness, some well-meaning people tried to show that after all there was no-

ble blood running in his veins, that his real father was an earl—maybe the Earl of Selkirk—or, at any rate, some one of gentle birth. There are always people of this sort, who seem to think that greatness must be the child of riches and polite breeding. They have even tried to prove that the mighty Shakespeare was a baronet's son, as if the author of "Hamlet" could have been honored, in any way, by a title. And they could not bear to think that the famous admiral was the son of a Scotch gardener. Such, however, he was, and like many great men he inherited his genius and character from his mother.

About the beautiful mansion of his father's patron and employer, within hearing of the mighty waves that dashed against the Galloway shore hard by—and suggested, for ought we know, to the adventurous heart of the boy, a longing for the sea—the young John Paul spent the fleeting and precious days of his early childhood.

We shall come back here, to this home, with

him after a while when events have become more stirring, so it is well to become acquainted with it now.

He led a free and happy life amid these grand surroundings. He climbed the trees and ate the luscious apples, and tore his clothes as he ought to have done, and as it is a little boy's right to do. Perhaps the weird music of the desolate ocean, the distant peak of the great mountain of Hellvellyn which rose above its neighbors not far away, did their part to plant the seeds of future courage in the boy's heart.

About the pretty cottage, on Mr. Craik's estate, rose the rugged Scotch hills, weird and silent, save for the shrieks of wild birds that nested high among them, or the dismal echoes from the distant sea. It was amid these scenes that the old witches met the fearless and warlike Macbeth, and told him how to go forth and win renown and glory. It was among these grand, inspiring

scenes that the little John Paul first gazed abroad upon the world.

As years gave him strength to wander, these views, with all their weird legends, inspired him to ramble forth. Sometimes with the son of Mr. Craik, he explored the rocks and caverns, climbed the heights, and gazed out over the broad expanse of ocean. Perhaps he wondered a little about the strange land beyond, and longed to go there. He could see the ships which passed along the shore nearby, and hear the hoarse voices of the hardy mariners borne upon the inward breeze. He could hear the loud, gruff commands of mates and skip-pers. Down in the little bay, along the edge of the lawn, the storm-tossed vessels often came for shelter, and their tall masts mingled with the slender trees of the grove along the water's edge, and seemed to be a part of it. We may well imagine the wide open eyes of the little boy, as he watched the sailors rowing toward the shore, in their small boats, and listened to their wonderful tales of



It was on this vessel that the young patriot sailor first raised the American flag.—Page 30.

adventure, of treasures dug up in mysterious islands, and terrible battles fought with pirates, on the high seas,

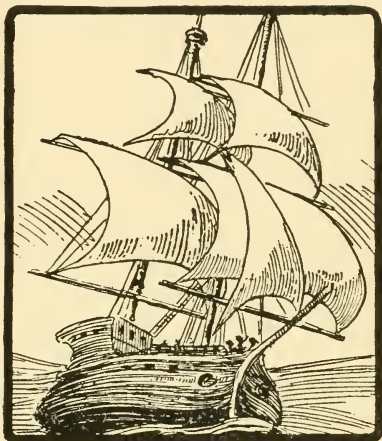
So he passed the happy days until he was twelve years old, when he bade good-bye to his parents, and went across the Firth to Whitehaven, to be bound apprentice to Mr. Younger, a merchant in the American trade.

I have seen many pictures of the famous admiral, standing on the decks of vessels in the midst of shot and shell ; and inspiring scenes they are indeed. But still I cannot seem to banish from my mind the thoughts of a shabby wide eyed little boy, but twelve years old, clinging to the deck-rail of a lurching ship, his coat and hair blown by the ocean wind, looking far off over the restless sea. And I wonder whether he was not sometimes lonely but did not dare to say so—and whether he wanted to go home.

CHAPTER II

LAND HO !

The crew of the good bark "*Friendship*" were an exceedingly jolly company of men, who drank their grog and spun their yarns in the cabin at night, and called "ship



a hoy" and "heave ho" and any number of other incomprehensible things which the young apprentice could never understand. But the graceful ship seemed to obey her masters very well indeed for all the queer things they said about her, for she reared and lunched but still went gaily on her way, riding over the rolling

waves as if she were accustomed to these things and were not to be disturbed by them at all.

As the last faint vestige of his native shore faded into a pale shadow, and then, as they sped further from it, seemed to dissolve into the air, until nothing was visible about them but the sea, the little sailor must have felt that he was quite alone in the great world. But it was not long before he began to conjure up within his mind the wondrous sights that he would see upon the mystic shores that he was going to visit and these imaginings filled his heart with hope and joyous expectation as the days rolled on.

One morning, when he was standing near the deck-rail dreaming of the new life which was now unfolding itself before him, a sailor stopped and asked him if he had ever been to sea before.

“I have been across the channel,” he replied, “but never on a long voyage.”

“Well, I’ll tell yer what, then,” said the seaman, “you’ve never been in a reg’lar storm.”

“No sir, and I do not want to be in a storm,” answered the boy. “Do you think that we shall have a storm?”

“Think?” shouted the man in great astonishment, “why, Lord bless me, I know we’ll have one—we’re heading right for one. You see that dark spot over yonder? Well, that’s the Azores. You’ll see that spot will turn into land tomorrow and the next day we’ll pass it and then it will blow like His Royal Highness the devil was holding court—for there’s always a storm about those islands—and has been ever since 1564.”

“What makes it?” asked the boy.

“Well, some thinks as the devil uses the place to hold his parliaments, and that the noise is made by the angry members when his infernal majesty vetoes bills. But there’s not much truth in that opinion. All I know is as it’s always storming there.”

The prospect of passing through the region

while these tempestuous debates were being carried on was not at all reassuring to our young hero, and he asked whether the storms were usually regarded as dangerous.

“Well,” replied the man, “that ’ud be hard to say. Some vessels have been wrecked along there and some has went down.”

“And was that long ago?”

“Yes, years ago—the crews would all be dead now anyway—even if they hadn’t a drowned, so it’s just the same as if it never happened.”

This was not a very encouraging reflection, philosophical as it was, and the little boy was on the point of asking whether it would not be possible to vary the ship’s course a little, so as to go round the storm and not straight through it, when the seaman, seating himself upon a windlass, volunteered to tell the more authentic version as to the cause of this chronic storm.

“You’ve heard of Ribault,” said he. “Well, it’s some of his men, or one of ’em in particular, as causes these storms.”

“Why, Ribault’s men must all be dead,” urged the boy.

“Yes, but one of ’em’s ghost isn’t—did yer ever see a French ghost?”

“No, I never have,” answered young John.

“Well, they’re the worst kind—I can tell yer that. Now this Ribault, when he sailed from France in that year, left a party of Huguenots and some sailors some where in Florida and he came back home to France. Well, these people that he left tried to make a settlement and they quarreled, for everybody wanted to be governor, and some of ’em up and says, ‘We’ll go back home—that’s what we’ll do?’ So they rigged up a sort o’ boat and started back to France. Well, as any one might know, that boat drifted about on the ocean one way and the other until, if ye’d believe it, she was half way across and then she went down and the crew of her took to the two small boats that they’d fetched along. Well, now, one of those

life-boats was picked up by an English schooner, and her men who were freezing and starving were fetched to England and stood up before Queen Elizabeth, being great curiosities. And then they told their story, and that's how Queen Bess got the notion in 'er head to send Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Francis Drake out exploring and colonizing on the western continent. But what became of the other life-boat no man saw. She must have gone down close upon those Azore Islands, for one of her passengers—a French Huguenot—swam to the shore and waited for some boat to come along and pick him up. He hailed and called and danced day after day and month after month, but no boat came near enough to notice him, until finally he died after standing on the edge of that shore and waving his hands and yelling at the top of his lungs for seven years. But having more power as a ghost than he had had when he was only a man, he just kept right on standing there,

and summoned up all the imps and spirits of the sea to make a great storm for him in hopes of wrecking some vessel and getting her attention. For that ghost could do anything but swim. And there the spirit of that French Huguenot has been standing from that day to this, one hundred and ninety-four years, stirring up the ocean and the wind and brewing a great gale that never stops, in the hopes of getting off the island. And they do say as on dark and blustering nights you can hear that Huguenot moaning and wailing amid the wind and storm, and see his anxious, ashy face glaring through the gale when the lightning brightens up the dark sky. But being a French Huguenot, nobody pays any attention to him, least wise those as comes from France, for the French king says that as he and his crazy band wanted to own a land and have their own kind of religion in it, so now he has one all by his self and he ought to be contented to stay there.”

Young John Paul had no comment to make on this extraordinary tale except the comment of two wondering eyes and a rather doubtful expression of countenance. But on the next day the truth of, at least, part of the seaman's tale was very certainly confirmed, for as they neared the islands it became apparent that a dreadful storm was overhanging the gallant little bark. The sky became black and the raging of the ocean was quite terrible to behold. Great watery mountains came rolling in from afar and burst madly into fearful cavernous valleys, into which the little vessel plunged as if she were disappearing forever into the unknown depths of the ocean. In the midst of the terrific gale and tremendous breakers, weird uncanny noises could be faintly heard over the lonely sea. The boy fancied that amid these sounds he could hear a hollow voice which seemed to come from far away, and once or twice he thought he saw a fleshless face with dreadful eyes staring at the

“*Friendship*” as she weathered through the raging storm. But soon the little vessel passed the haunted shores and turned her prow straight toward fair Virginia, the colony of the gallant Raleigh and the name-sake of old England’s greatest queen. From this point on, the course of the “*Friendship*,” unlike the course of her sister attribute, “true love,” ran very smoothly indeed, and before many more days had passed the fresh sweet-scented air, wafted from the luxurious garden of the South, could be felt on the decks of Mr. Younger’s ship.

CHAPTER III

SAILOR AND PATRIOT

John's big brother lived at Fredericksburg, in Virginia, less than a hundred miles from that other Frederic town, where good old Barbara Fretchie waved her American flag from her



attic window a hundred years later as the Confederate troops marched by. So he made his way to his brother's home, and announced that he was in port for a brief stay.

The gallant little sailor of thirteen years was received in the pleasant home, and spent most of

his time there while he was on shore. It was a typical Virginia home—a planter's estate—with wide, flat fields of fertile soil, filled with tall, graceful cornstalks bending to the breeze.

The honored guest had a room to himself, with a globe and a map to study with, and he spent his spare time in learning the geography of the world and the art of navigation. All about him, in the beautiful land of Virginia, the busy planters tilled their fields, and from the little crooked window of his room, he could see miles and miles of wheat and corn stretching away like a vast, billowy sea.

No one knew that the boy, up in the window, was preparing himself to help save these beautiful slopes and meadows, these happy homes, from the clutches of the English king. He did not know it himself. But in the fullness of time he came forth, as we shall see, ready to do his share in the great task.

Pretty soon, Mr. Younger, the merchant,

failed, which was a very fortunate thing for Master John Paul, for it gave him a chance to climb a step higher. He was a very fortunate youngster, such as we seldom read of out of story books; for men were always failing, or dying, or giving up their commissions so as to give him a chance. Everything seemed to favor him as the years rolled by. Soon the young man became third mate on a slave ship of Whitehaven. Then the chief mate on another slave ship, called "*The Two Friends*," died, and John Paul became chief mate on that craft. But the man who was later to fight for liberty, so bravely, could not bear to see his fellow beings in chains, so he gave up that occupation in disgust when he had seen a little of its horrors and cruelties. He was then nineteen years of age, and he took passage on a passenger vessel bound for his beloved and native Scotland. During the voyage both the captain and the first mate died, and John Paul took command, and brought the vessel safely over the

broad Atlantic into port. When the owners of the vessel learned the circumstances, they at once made him captain, and sent him to the West Indies. So you see that John Paul was born under an unusually lucky star.

When he was twenty-four years old, he made another trip to Scotland, and some people say that he was engaged in smuggling in the Isle of Man. Nobody ever told him this to his face however and, when he heard about the old rumor later in life he denied it.

He had now come to be twenty-six years old and he went back to Virginia, where his good brother had lately died, intending to settle down comfortably on the large estate, and be a country gentleman, and live out the rest of his days in peace and ease. For two years, he stayed on the old place, living a serene and placid life among his cattle herds and horses, and it was then that he took the name of Jones, perhaps because it was a plain and quiet name, and suitable to the

calm and quiet life he was leading. A good many people have given guesses on this subject, and this is offered as a brand new guess.

He lived in the good old way that Americans lived in those good old days, the days we hear of in song and story, but which have faded away as our beloved country has grown larger and richer; the good old-fashioned days that are no more.

While this rover of the seas was thus passing his days in the retirement of his fine country home, great events were taking place in the Virginia colony, and in the other colonies along the shore. All about him were beginning to be seen preparations for a mighty struggle. Up in the grand old commonwealth of Massachusetts, brave men were speaking out brave thoughts that rang through the land, and stirred the good people as they had never been stirred before. Samuel Adams, the sturdy old Quaker, was being called a rebel. And the British commander held a warrant for the arrest of John Hancock, which he

couldn't serve because he couldn't find him. In every little quiet home, men were waiting with their muskets ready for the call to arms, and in a hundred villages the sturdy minute-men drilled on the public greens and waited. Gen. Gage, with his proud British regulars, was in Boston, waiting for the spirit of rebellion to rise a little higher and give him an excuse to shoot upon the brave and honest pioneers.

Then it was that Patrick Henry called out, "Give me liberty or give me death." Then it was that the Continental Congress met in Philadelphia and Virginia sent her illustrious son, Thomas Jefferson, to speak for her, and say that she would do her part. Then it was that royal governors were losing their royal nerve, and trembling in their royal shoes. Then it was that George Washington stood at his mother's arm-chair, and bending over her bade her good-bye, and went forth to take command. Then it was that John Paul Jones came forth from his retreat

—he who understood the sea, the young ship's master—and offered himself to the oppressed and struggling colonies, and to the glorious cause.

On Dec. 22, 1775, he was appointed a Lieutenant in the Colonial Navy. A fleet of thirteen gallant little vessels was equipped, and on one of these, the flagship "*Alfred*," our hero opened his thrilling career as a fighter on the high seas.

We must now forget the little boy who was born among the Scotch hills, and who sailed on the good bark "*Friendship*," for it is a naval hero whom we have to follow through conflict and danger and bloodshed, into victory and fame. It was on this vessel that the young patriot sailor first raised the American flag, in honor of the commander-in-chief who came on board, and as it floated in the sky above them, a rousing cheer was sent up for the emblem of the new-born land. It was the first time the national banner had been given to the breeze, and it floated in the free air until the end was known—until Cornwallis had

surrendered—until the thirteen colonies were an independent nation. Paul Jones was then twenty-nine years old. His figure was light and graceful, his movements quick, and his brown face wore a melancholy and thoughtful look. He was small, like Napoleon, with clear, keen, fearless eyes, and tradition says that there was a strange fascination about him which none who knew him could resist or overcome.

Besides this, I have no doubt at all that he could dance a horn-pipe, and that the deck planks of the good ship “*Alfred*” very frequently felt the inspiring touches of his airy steps and twirls. For a horn-pipe is a thing which every jolly tar knows how to do, and as there is no such thing in history as a tar who was *not* jolly, we may be assured that the boisterous seamen of the “*Friendship*” had instructed young John in that graceful maritime accomplishment, many years before.

CHAPTER IV

LIEUTENANT AND CAPTAIN

In those days, Lord Dunmore, the royal governor of Virginia, made his headquarters on a British vessel, off the coast, because he was afraid to set foot on land. As there wasn't



any royal governing to do, he spent his time ravaging the little villages along the Virginia shore. So the American squadron was directed to sail against him. But the old excuse of ice in the river, which prevents so many of us from getting to our work promptly even now, kept the vessels in the Delaware, and when they

finally did sail it was toward the Bahama Islands. It was feared that they could not get into the harbor of New Providence, but John Paul Jones volunteered to lead the way, and then the rest followed and anchored safely in the bay. The next morning, Lieut. Jones sailed away with a good many military stores, which he had taken, and with the governor of the island, who was very much astonished, as you may suppose, at being taken captive. On his way back, he fell in with a British vessel, which got away from him, however, and soon he put into New London. Because of this successful little expedition, Paul Jones was made a captain and given a boat, the sloop "*Providence*." With this vessel, he sailed out on the Atlantic and struck terror to English vessels, and to hostile settlements along the shore. After a short while he put into Newport with some valuable prizes. Then with the "*Alfred*" and the "*Providence*," both, he made a voyage to Cape Breton. It was get-

ting so now that a British vessel would rather encounter almost anything than Paul Jones and his bold little ship. They were growing to look upon him as a sort of hurricane always to be encountered and always dreaded. Whatever was needed for the ill-fed and poorly-clad American troops, he managed to secure out on the seas. He brought a goodly store of clothes and blankets to Gen. Washington's soldiers, and the Continental Congress grew to regard him as a sort of property man, or master of supplies. He continued this valuable service for two years, taking prizes and stores, capturing British vessels, and getting away in a most unaccountable manner from those he could not take. He would appear and disappear as if he came out of the depths of the ocean, and no one knew what to expect.

Finally, he was ordered to go to France in a little vessel called the "*Ranger*," and take possession of a large vessel that was being built for him there. The "*Ranger*" had eighteen guns,

which the gallant little captain said was more than he needed, and after a rough and stormy voyage, she sailed into Nantes with two prizes which she had taken on the way. Paul Jones seldom came into port without some kind of a prize. He was a sort of naval Santa Claus who could always be relied upon to bring good things home to the young colonies. Wherever he went he got things, and he always sailed into port loaded down like a suburban resident.

When he had landed, he made his way to Paris, where he was disappointed to learn that the vessel which was being secretly built for him could not be completed, as the English had put a stop to it with some very nice international law. So he decided to go on a demolishing expedition around the British Isles, with his little eighteen-gun "*Ranger*." But before he started out, he put in motion a splendid scheme to defeat Earl Howe's squadron which was anchored in the Delaware river, and preparing to do all sorts of things

to the Southern colonies. He made arrangements to employ a French fleet under Count D'Estaing, to sail over and attack the British ships.

Before he left France, he asked to have the American flag saluted by the French war vessels, so that he could say that our emblem had been formally and publicly recognized. This was done amid wild cheering, and the good ship "*Ranger*" turned her prow toward the Isle of Man. Paul Jones was in high spirits, for he longed to deal with the enemy on her native shore, and avenge the insults and outrages of British cruisers along the American coast. While he was in France, he wrote so many letters home that nobody has been able to get trace of them all. But he did and said many things while there which helped to make the French people sympathize with the Colonial cause.

There was loud singing on the light and graceful little "*Ranger*" as she rose upon the waves in the English channel, and wild sea-gulls gath-



The tall masts of a hundred merchant ships rose like shadowy spectres.—Page 3 .

ered about her, as she sped along, as if they too were interested in the good cause and were urging her on. Thus she bounded joyously along, with a hundred stout hearts aboard her, until the captain found that the wind was fair for Whitehaven, which, as you will remember, was the port from which little John Paul sailed to Virginia, nineteen years before. So he decided to deal a mighty blow to Whitehaven.

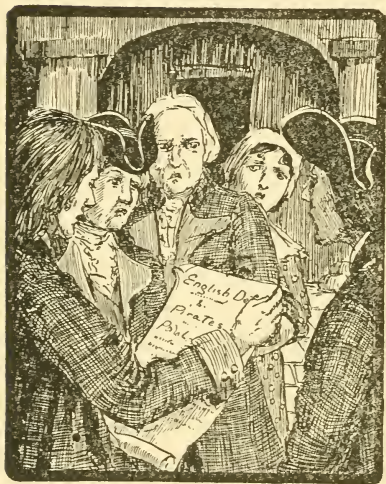
At midnight on April 26, 1778, under cover of the darkness, he sailed, with two small boats, into the harbor. Against the black sky the tall masts of a hundred merchant ships rose like shadowy spectres. Not a sound could be heard except the gentle splashing of the oars, as the two little boats, with Paul Jones standing in the foremost, approached the landing. As the men stepped ashore, the first pale light of dawn told them they had not a moment to lose. The little band crept stealthily up a rocky hill, to where an old fort was located, and after a little resistance from the sur-

prised and frightened occupants, it was taken. They then set fire to one of the British merchantmen, and as the red flames rose crackling, in the pale morning light, from the doomed vessel, Paul Jones stood near her, pistol in hand, to shoot down any Britisher who should approach the burning craft, or try to save her. He took three British soldiers away with him as souvenirs, and as the two little boats made their way back to the waiting "*Ranger*," a great crowd of astonished and terror-stricken inhabitants stood gaping on the shore.



CHAPTER V

THE GALLANT "RANGER"



You may well suppose that the English were amazed at the gallant little captain's audacity. They had ravaged the American shores to their hearts' content, supposing that their own be-

loved and well-protected water fronts were safe from harm, and ever after this event they spoke of Paul Jones as a wicked pirate, and mothers frightened their disobedient children with his name, and told them of the fiery-tailed comet,

disguised as a man, which dashed along the rocky shores at night.

But John Paul Jones had done nothing that the English did not try to do in America. He had the authority of his country for everything he did, and the real reason that he was so despised was because he was so successful.

It was now morning—the bright sun shone on the little “*Ranger*” as she bounded merrily over the waves until she sailed into the well-known bay where John Paul had seen the ships anchored when he was a little boy. He visited the old home, and for a few short hours trod once again the well-known grounds which once had been so dear. How strangely familiar these ancient haunts and landmarks must have seemed to the little boy who played among them twenty years before—so many things had happened since he went forth into the great world.

But time was precious, and he did not tarry long at the old place. He made a visit to the

IN CONGRESS.

THE DELEGATES of the UNITED STATES of *New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Bay, Rhode-Island, Connecticut, New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North-Carolina, South-Carolina, and Georgia, &c*

John Paul Jones Esq

WE, reposing especial Trust and Confidence in your Patriotism, Valour, Conduct, and Fidelity, DO, by these Presents, constitute and appoint you to be

of the armed called the _____ in the ^{*Navy*} ~~Service~~ of the United States of North-America, fitted out for the Defence of American Liberty, and for repelling every hostile Invasion thereof. You are therefore carefully and diligently to discharge the Duty of *Captain*

by doing and performing all manner of Things thereunto belonging. And we do strictly charge and require all Officers, Marines and Seamen under your Command, to be obedient to your Orders as *Captain*

And you are to observe and follow such Orders and Directions from Time to Time as you shall receive from this or a future Congress of the United States, or Committee of Congress for that Purpose appointed, or Commander in Chief for the Time being of the Navy of the United States, or any other your superior Officer, according to the Rules and Discipline of War, the Usage of the Sea, and the Instructions herewith given you, in Pursuance of the Trust reposed in you. This Commission to continue in Force until revoked by this or a future Congress.

DATED at *Philadelphia* *October 10th 1776.*

By Order of the CONGRESS.

John Hancock

PRESIDENT.

ATTEST. *Charles Thomson*

Earl of Selkirk's place nearby, and it was very fortunate that the old earl was not at home or he would have been taken away as a prisoner.

Some time before these events, Capt. Jones had tried to surprise and capture a British man-of-war named the "*Drake*" in the Irish harbor of Carrickfergus. Everything had gone wrong, his cable had broken, the plan had been discovered and the bold project given up. But now the "*Drake*" was instructed to sail out, and find the wicked "*Ranger*," and punish her as she deserved for her recent little excursion along the British shore. Now it happened that at the same time, the "*Ranger*" was searching for the "*Drake*," for Capt. Jones was anxious to have the fight which he had promised himself a month or two before. They met off Carrickfergus, and, as usual, the British vessel was larger and better fitted than the one in which Capt. Jones sailed. He never fought a battle in all his life where he had any advantage to begin with. When the two

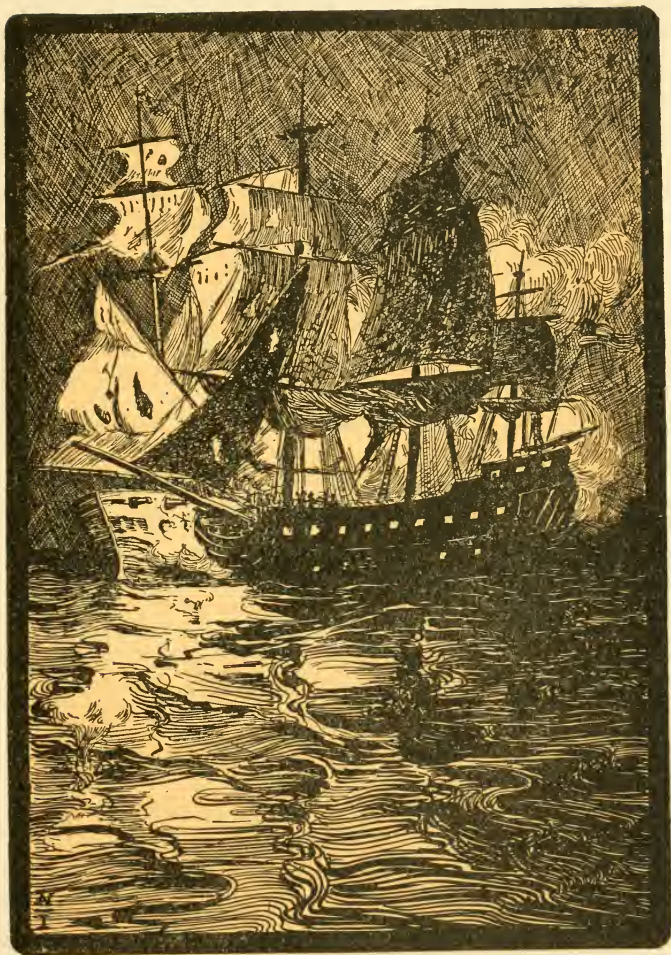
boats came in range of each other they hoisted colors, and at the same time the "*Drake*" hailed:

"What ship is that?"

And Jones answered:

"The American Continental ship '*Ranger*.' We are waiting for you—come on—its getting late and time to begin."

So the "*Drake*" opened fire, and all her crew laughed merrily at the impudence of the little American craft. But in those days it was the captain, and not the craft, that counted, as we shall soon see. In a moment, the heaven was lurid with the wild fire of conflicting guns. Amid the din and uproar of that fierce and bitter hour, the little captain ran about his vessel, issuing commands, and filling his men with the wildest enthusiasm. Not for one moment did the flag of the United Colonies cease to wave above her brave defender, to give her men new courage and fresh hope. For more than an hour this fear-



The fight between the "Bon Homme Richard" and the
"Serapis."—Page 53.

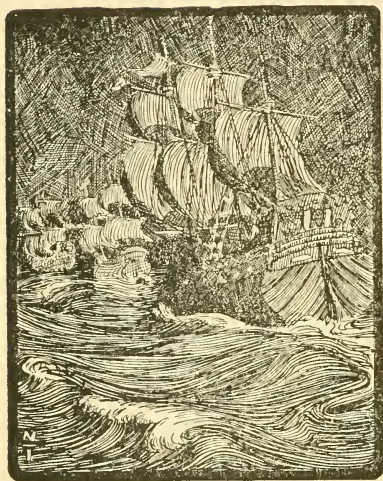
ful battle went on; for more than an hour the gallant little "*Ranger*" held her own and poured her well-aimed shots into the haughty man-of-war. Finally the "*Drake*," whose crew had sneered at the little "*Ranger*," ceased firing, and surrendered to John Paul Jones. It was a fearful conflict, and a grand victory. It carried fear into the English navy, powerful as it was, and when the news of it reached the colonies, where Gen. Washington was fighting so bravely, vast multitudes sent up three cheers for their peerless hero of the sea. The "*Drake*" lost forty of her crew, and was in a very bad condition. With his prize, Capt. Jones sailed around Ireland, taking other prizes, and finally put into the harbor of Brest in France. On his way there, he met the large French fleet that he had helped to procure for the Colonies. It was on its way to the Delaware, and Jones was hailed as a hero by all her officers and crew. He was a very famous man now—loaded with glory and honors. When

he reached France, all were anxious to see the wonderful fighter—the hero of the Colonial navy—the conqueror of the “*Drake*.” But Jones was there for a purpose which it took him a year to accomplish, but which had great results, as we shall see in the next chapter.

Meanwhile he enjoyed himself as people are apt to do in care-free and merry France, and his agreeable manners and charming personality took him into the most polite and cultivated society of that polite and cultivated land. He became a “lion,” which is a name that people give to men who are very much sought after, though why a man who is thus honored should be called a lion in preference to a tiger or a giraffe, I am sure I do not know. However this may be, I am glad to tell you that John Paul Jones was not spoiled in the least by all these flatteries and attentions, though I am equally sorry to have to tell you that he remained an old bachelor all his life.

CHAPTER VI

A TERRIBLE SEA FIGHT



When Paul Jones first went over to France from the Colonies, he took with him the splendid news that the English Burgoyne had surrendered his British Regulars to Gen. Gates, which caused great rejoicing in Paris, because the French people were not feeling very friendly toward the English at that time. They began to see that the Colonies meant business, and they thought that possibly they might be willing to help them a little more if they were politely

asked. The French king was having a great laugh to see the fine British army handing its swords to a few patriotic farmers, and he thought that if he could just stand in the background and help a little, without being seen, it would be a very generous and noble act, and help the fun along immensely. Of course, Capt. Jones knew this, so as soon as he arrived in Brest, he appealed to the French king for a squadron to help in the good cause of Colonial liberty. But he had a year of anxious waiting before any response came to his efforts. Then the king and his ministers, after putting him off a dozen times, gave him a fleet in which to go after the English. It was a strange collection of boats—boats that had been cast off as useless, with crews and officers that ought to have been cast off as useless, too. One of these, a worn out old boat that should have been sawed up for kindling wood, was called the “*Bon Homme Richard*,” but “*Poor Richard*” is

the name that Benjamin Franklin gave her, and this name fitted her about the best of all. She had had several names. Jones used her as his flagship, and her name has come down in history, for she took part in the greatest naval battle that was ever fought between two single vessels on the high seas.

The officers were all French, but the fleet sailed under the American flag. The "*Richard*" had a strange crew of three hundred and seventy-five sailors of several different countries, and she carried forty-two guns. Each captain wanted to command the whole fleet, and all were jealous of the famous American. Many of them deserted until Paul Jones, who was now a commodore, had only three vessels besides his own.

They sailed from France in the middle of August, 1779, and cruised along the Yorkshire coast. After taking a few prizes, as usual, the Commodore was preparing to end his voyage in Holland, when something happened which

sent his name ringing over all the world, and made the British empire stand aghast.

Just as the September sun was setting, after a long and sultry afternoon, the Commodore, standing on the deck of the "*Richard*," with his spyglass, noticed a few specks far off over the water. Larger and larger they grew, and nearer and nearer they came, until he saw plainly that they were the great Baltic fleet of merchant vessels escorted by two noble men-of-war. Surely this merchant fleet was safe under the protection of such an escort. Surely no harm could come to it, as it made its way slowly and majestically seaward.

Paul Jones knew that if any battle was to take place, it would be without the help of his other vessels, for their cowardly commanders were not to be depended upon. So he watched the movements of the stately procession as it neared the poor, old battered "*Richard*," and sent its ripples rolling toward her hulk. But the same man

who had trodden the deck of the "*Ranger*" watched her passing with a keen eye. His look was intense. So, the line of boats passed by in the gathering darkness.

Suddenly an order went forth from the "*Richard*." It was an order to give chase. The French officers thought the Commodore insane. Two of them did not obey. The British vessels immediately prepared to defend the merchantmen. The fight which followed happened in the dark. The "*Richard*" was within musket-shot of the "*Serapis*"—the larger of the two British men-of-war. The wind was slack, and the two vessels came in contact. The rigging became entangled, and the gallant Paul Jones, leading his men with waving sword, tried to board the British man-of-war. A terrible fight with pistols and swords followed, and he was repulsed by Capt. Pearson, the commander of the "*Serapis*."

"Have your colors struck?" called the English captain.

“I have not begun to fight yet,” replied John Paul Jones.

From deck to deck of the entangled vessels the combatants madly rushed, fighting like demons. Soon the “*Richard*” began to sink; slowly she was filling with water. Most of her guns were silenced, but one or two of those in her tower still sent deadly volleys down upon the foe. At half past nine, the moon rose in the quiet sky, upon a fearful scene. The “*Richard*” was on fire. In the midst of smoke, and smothered flame, and the roar of great guns, men as furious as wounded tigers were struggling hand to hand. At that moment, a cry went up that the “*Richard*” was sinking. A frightened gunner started to pull down the American flag, but was thrust aside by Paul Jones.

“Do you want quarter for your sinking ship?” asked the English captain.

“Never,” replied Paul Jones, and as the bat-

tered old craft burned and sank, the brave fight went on.

And the fight was won; won by Paul Jones, the daring and intrepid commander. Slowly the flames crept up the rigging of the "*Serapis*," and by their glow, and by the full light of the moon, Paul Jones saw that his shots had almost cut Pierson's mainmast in two. The moonlight and the sudden bursts of flame showed the Commodore that the English sailors were getting few, and that all was confusion on the larger craft. He hurled another shot upon it, and the tall mast reeled and fell like a dead man. The "*Serapis*" had been frightfully damaged. The English captain saw his peril, and striking his flag, surrendered to Paul Jones. As Pierson handed his sword to the gallant American, Commodore Jones handed it back, saying:

"You have fought like a hero, and
I have no doubt your king will re-
ward you."

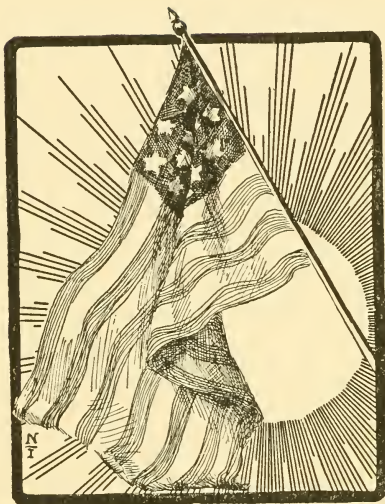
Pierson's king *did* reward him by making him a baronet. When Paul Jones heard of this, he said :

“He deserved it, and if I meet him again I'll make a lord of him.”

But however grateful and appreciative King George the Third might have been to the captain who fought so loyally in the Royal cause, the victory of Paul Jones that night in those British waters was a humiliation to the English government, from which, even among her glories and triumphs, she has never quite recovered. It was an hour for Britannia to discontinue her little song about ruling the waves, and to bow her head in shame. For an old wooden tub had sailed into her waters and hurled defiance at her invincible navy. She might soothe her beaten captain tenderly, but she could not get her vessel back, and worse than this the French king was laughing in a most uproarious manner across the channel.

CHAPTER VII

LAST YEARS



After this wonderful victory, Paul Jones transferred his crew from the sinking "*Richard*" to the "*Serapis*," and sailed triumphantly to Holland. As he landed, great multitudes of people crowded to the wharf to get a glimpse of the American hero, and do him honor. After remaining a little while in Amsterdam, he set sail for France where Benjamin Franklin was waiting to receive him. You may well imagine how the illustrious hero

of the "*Bon Homme Richard*" was received by the affectionate and light-hearted French people. The French king, Louis XVI, who had his head chopped off a little later, presented him with a gold-hilted sword, and gave him so many honorable titles and degrees that he could scarcely hold them all. He received no end of flattery and attention. After a while, he thought that he would go to America, so he set sail in a little vessel called the "*Ariel*," and arrived in Philadelphia in February, 1781. Of course, he took some prizes on the way back, and he received a welcome home that spread enthusiasm over all the land. The Continental Congress voted a golden medal to the conquerer, and great crowds cheered him, and followed him about.

It was a glorious time for the good colonists, and all were filled with hope and joy. Down in Virginia, Gen. Washington had Lord Cornwallis in a very tight place, and my Lord was beginning to feel that the only way out of it

was to surrender. The long, hard, bitter struggle was almost ended and the thirteen colonies were soon to take their place among the great nations of the world.

But Paul Jones was not idle. He joined the French fleet that was fighting in the Colonial cause, and battled gallantly for his country's freedom. And when all was over, when the last bugle had been blown, when the hardy farmers had lain down their arms and had gone back to their homes and fields, when the last British Regular had been packed off home, John Paul Jones asked if there was anything more he could do, for he wanted to fight just as long as there was any excuse for battle.

He lived quietly in the United States for two years. But the old house of his good brother in Virginia he never saw again. It is there that we should *like* to think of his ending his days—there among the rich vine-clad hills, under the

quiet Southern sky, amid all the sweet influences of his beautiful country home.

He was born to be a rover, to fight whenever and wherever he could, and to help where help was needed.

He went back to France, and tried to collect some prize money. Then he went to Denmark, and then to Russia, where the Empress received him kindly, and made him a rear admiral in the Russian navy. Russia was then at war, and once again he took his sword in hand, and fought her battles on the Black Sea. But she did not appreciate his services. Her officers were jealous of the great man, and he was dismissed from the service without any explanation or just cause. From there he went to Paris, where he had first listened to the world's applause, and where he had many friends. Here he lived—going into the public assemblies now and then until his health began to fail. In 1792, the United States sent a ship to France, with a commission to Paul

Jones to fight the Barbary powers, who were causing trouble for American vessels in the far East. But it was too late, for when the vessel arrived in France, the gallant patriot and fighter was no more.

One day he sent for two notaries, who found him sitting in a great armchair. He told them that he was an American citizen, and wanted to make his will. He dictated it with much effort, for he was very ill, and then the notaries went away. Not long after, the doctor came to make his usual visit. No one was in the armchair. On going into the next room they found him lying face downward on the bed, with his feet resting on the floor. On turning him over, it was found that he was dead.

Two days after his death, the remains of Paul Jones were placed in a leaden coffin, in case the United States should ever claim them, and conducted, as was supposed, to their last resting-place.

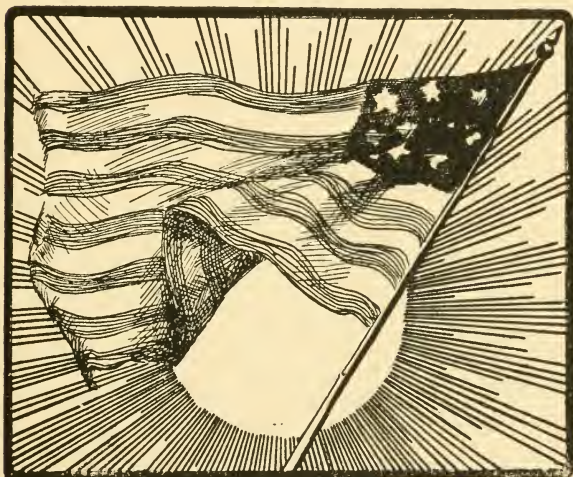


He dictated it with much effort; for he was very ill.—Page 60.

Not long ago, the United States *did* claim the ashes of her illustrious citizen, and buried them in the country his courage had defended—under the flag his own hand first gave to the skies. After the lapse of more than a century, his remains were recently discovered in a tomb at the French capital. They were brought to the United States in grand state, on one of our large war vessels. How surprised the hero would have been could he have known of the great steel man-of-war that was at last bearing him home. A solemn funeral was held, and the ashes of the restless patriot were placed in the chapel crypt of our Naval Academy at Annapolis.

But his fame lives and increases as time goes on. He fought against fearful odds, and the vessels that he captured were always better than his own. His country, now grown large and powerful, has lately turned to honor him, and future generations will come to think of him

not only as a brave and good man, but as the most wonderful naval genius that ever fought under the American flag.



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